

## **SENATOR MCCAIN URGES NATO RENAISSANCE**

### **Calls for “global order of peace” built on a “foundation of freedom”**

**February 8, 2008**

U.S. Senator John McCain (R-AZ) today issued the following statement in lieu of his annual speech at the Munich Security Conference, which he has attended for many years.

The charge before the transatlantic community today is to establish the basis for a new global order of peace, one that will last not just for a decade but for the rest of this century. And as we move forward, we know that there can be no true and lasting peace unless it is built on a foundation of freedom. Today we need a rebirth of NATO, a renaissance of the transatlantic relationship to extend peace, prosperity, and democracy far into the 21st century.

The first step toward a rejuvenated NATO could begin at the Bucharest summit. It is vital that the alliance take the initiative on the following key issues:

#### **Afghanistan**

NATO, in partnership with the rest of the international community, must launch a comprehensive, urgent, and long-term recommitment to Afghanistan. We have been trying to win the struggle there with insufficient forces and with too little economic aid. We have failed to develop a clear, integrated political and development strategy – one that includes improved governance by the Afghan government – to complement the military counterinsurgency strategy. Some of these shortcomings are eerily reminiscent of the tragic mistakes that plagued the first four years of war in Iraq. We need not unending arguments and finger-pointing over which allies have stepped up to the fight, but rather a fresh look at what more each of us can bring to the effort. The truth is that we all need to do more, not just on the military side but also in contributing more development and civic aid and in working with the Afghan government on justice and the rule of law. Our efforts in Afghanistan should unite NATO, not divide it.

American soldiers are serving in Afghanistan alongside courageous and dedicated soldiers from Great Britain and Canada, from Germany and the Netherlands, from France, Spain, Turkey, Poland, and Lithuania. Together we are helping the Afghan people put down deep roots for a future of freedom and greater prosperity. But we are building and strengthening a global alliance of democracies that can act as a force for freedom and greater prosperity across the globe for decades to come.

#### **NATO Enlargement**

The Bucharest summit presents an opportunity to anchor democracy and stability in countries closer to home, with the addition to our alliance of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia. Enlargement in the past has advanced our strategic interests by stabilizing NATO's southern and eastern flanks and anchoring eastern European democracies firmly to the West. And it has put new members on a more secure and more prosperous course than most thought possible as communism began to crumble. This year's three NATO aspirants have demonstrated through extensive reforms that they have readied themselves for accession

day. And it is manifestly in our interest to bring stability to the Balkans, so long the locus of conflict on this continent. We can do this by anchoring the Balkans states firmly to the West and demonstrating that, so long as they are ready for NATO and other Euro-Atlantic institutions, we are ready for them.

### **Ukraine and Georgia**

Georgia and Ukraine have expressed their desire for a NATO Membership Action Plan. We should offer it to them at the summit. These two nations have every right to aspire to democracy and security as other states closer to the heart of Europe. Ukraine and Georgia have difficult neighbors and domestic challenges; they are young democracies and their road ahead will be difficult. But they should know that we will support them every step of the way, and we can show them this by supporting their aspirations at Bucharest.

### **Kosovo Independence**

It is time to bring Kosovo – and the Balkans with it – out of the 1990s and into the 21st century by recognizing Kosovo's independence. Eleven years ago, that region was in flames, characterized by ethnic cleansing and widespread violence. For the first time the region is today poised to move forward, with final status for Kosovo and transitioning continuing responsibilities there to increasing European control – at long last closing the door on the region's painful past.

### **Serbia**

We must ensure that Serbia can look toward the future as a modern and prosperous European nation. The proud people of Serbia have turned aside the temptations of ultranationalism in favor of moderation and a western orientation. The European Union has taken an important step by offering to establish regular political ties with Serbia, open up trade, and end visa restrictions. Now it can take the next step by setting forth a path to EU membership.

### **Global Partnerships**

The future of NATO lies not only in expanding its membership, transforming its mission, and deepening its commitments. It lies also in cooperating with states far from our shores. Today NATO and the European Union together comprise only a quarter of the more than 120 democracies around the world. Some – like Japan, Australia, and India – are proud, powerful and progressive nations committed to the values that have given our alliance such enduring strength. The 21st century world no longer divides neatly into geographic regions. Ideas, innovations and cultural influences travel rapidly and freely today as goods, services and capital. Moving just as rapidly are environmental calamities, diseases, international criminal rings, terrorist organizations, and the technologies of mass destruction. Our alliance must be as international in scope – partnering with willing democracies all over the world – as the challenges we confront.

NATO should partner with countries across the globe to address common threats. At the same time, we should work toward a global League of Democracies – one that would have NATO members at its core – dedicated to the defense and advancement of global democratic principles.